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ABSTRACT

In December 1991, the governor of Colorado established a task force to create a model for a statewide career development system for early childhood professionals. This report describes the Task Force and provides its findings and recommendations in four sections. Following an executive summary, section I discusses the founding of the Task Force and the process used to choose the early childhood professionals who served as members. Section II reviews innovative initiatives, in Colorado and at the national level, that supported the Task Force's efforts to create an integrated system of professional development, providing a brief description of each initiative and an address or contact person for further information. Section III describes the guiding principles of the Task Force, stressing the importance of child care in society and the need for a standardized approach, while section IV presents the recommendations and related action steps developed. The report presents the following recommendations: (1) establish the necessary mechanisms to carry out the Task Force recommendations; (2) ensure that all professionals working with young children have the same core knowledge and competencies; (3) create an articulation process for early childhood programs in secondary, two-year, four-year, and graduate institutions, and bridge noncredit and credit programs; and (4) improve salaries, benefits, and status to provide incentives. A list of Task Force members and letters of support are appended. (BCY)

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GOVERNOR ROY ROMER'S EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS TASK FORCE

A Proposal for a Colorado System of Early Childhood Professional Development: Findings, Recommendations and Action Plan

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"We know that the professional development of teachers is critical to the education process. It is even more true for teachers working with young at-risk children. I am concerned that so many early childhood professionals get pushed out of their dedicated work because they cannot make a living wage and because they don't have benefits. It is ironic that at a time when we have a whole country's attention focused on early childhood, more educators are leaving the field than ever before.

Certainly, good educational programs at an early age will go a long way. But for the quality that we need to really make the difference, we have to start investing in the people who work with children. Maybe every state needs a quality assurance program that rewards early childhood people for getting more training and for staying in the field."

-- Governor Roy Romer*

* keynote address at the National Association for the Education of Young Children Conference, Denver, 1991.

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Anna Jo Haynes

April 12, 1993

The Honorable Governor
Roy Romer
State Capitol
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Governor Romer:

On behalf of the members of your Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force, please accept this report in response to your charge to construct a career development model that creates incentives for early childhood professionals to remain in the field.

As you are aware, there is a growing recognition that early childhood education programs support the development of productive, responsible adults. Long-term studies have found that in addition to improved school performances, at-risk children who attend quality early childhood programs at ages three and four are more likely to complete high school and to go on to further vocational or college training. These same children are less likely to become teen parents or require special education or welfare services.

It is important to note however, that the referenced positive outcomes were associated with high quality preschool programs, which were staffed by early childhood professionals with specialized training and understanding of how young children learn. In Colorado and the nation, early childhood professionals are not required to have the levels of training associated with successful programs, nor are there consistent standards for people who work with children. A combination of low pay, lack of benefits and an ambiguous professional identity have caused a staffing shortage which is reaching critical proportions.

A United Way Agency

1510 HIGH STREET ♦ DENVER, CO 80218 ♦ (303) 388-5700

The Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force hopes that you will find the recommendations compiled in this report helpful as you continue to change and improve current policy and implement new early childhood programs through your proposed initiative. Specifically, we ask that you extend the duties of the Task Force to provide on-going leadership and oversight during the implementation of the action plan recommended to you in this report. In addition, we ask that you urge state agencies to implement recommendations within the intent of the plan.

We appreciate your consideration of this report and thank you for your continued leadership in support of children and families.

Sincerely,

Anna Jo Haynes

Anna Jo Haynes
Chair, Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force
Executive Director, Mile High Child Care Association

STATE OF COLORADO

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
136 State Capitol
Denver, Colorado 80203-1792
Phone (303) 866-2471

Roy Romer
Governor

May 14, 1993

Dear Task Force Members:

I want to express my thanks to you for your work on the Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force. The recommendations compiled in the task force's report provide the framework for creating an early childhood professional development system.

As you know, the key factor in good early childhood care and education is the teacher. The success of quality early childhood programs is directly related to the level of training of early childhood teachers. Yet, in Colorado, our fragmented professional system prevents us from getting and keeping these qualified teachers.

I have asked the commissioner of education and the executive directors of the Departments of Social Services, Health, Higher Education and Institutions to build on the recommendations of this task force to construct an early childhood professional development system. This system must address personnel standards and a system of credit transfer between two-year and four-year education institutions.

In addition, I am establishing the Early Childhood Professional Standards Committee as a standing committee of the ongoing First Impressions Advisory Council. The committee will provide leadership and oversight during the implementation of this professional development system.

Thank you again for your commitment to Colorado's children.

Sincerely,

Roy Romer
Governor

Special thanks to .....

Governor Romer and Mrs. Bea Romer for their unwavering commitment to Colorado's families and children.

The Colorado General Assembly for recognizing the importance of the early years of a young child's life through support of the Colorado Preschool Program and for the establishment of the Colorado Achievement Commission.

Anna Jo Haynes, chair of the Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force. Her commitment and dedication to young children and the field of early education is an inspiration to all children's advocates.

Gwen Morgan, Joan Costley, Andrea Genser and the staff at Wheelock College's Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education for their technical assistance to this process.

Betty Hutchison, professor at National-Louis University, for her work with the State Team during the National Association for the Education of Young Children's National Institute Conference.

The staff and governing board of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). NAEYC's National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development has helped us envision "what can be" and has kept us apprised of the national perspective.

Donna Chitwood, Director of the Governor's Office, Families and Children initiatives, for her vision and ability to put thought into action.

Members of the Task Force for the generous contribution of their time and expertise in developing the plan for Colorado's professional development system.

Members of the resource groups for their technical assistance to the Task Force in developing the plan.

For more information contact:

Kathleen Shindler
Special Projects Coordinator
Governor's Office
First Impressions
136 State Capitol
Denver, CO 80203
(303) 866-2155

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In December 1991, Governor Romer responded to the growing demand for qualified early childhood professionals by establishing an Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force. The Task Force was asked to construct a career development model that created incentives for early care and education professionals to remain in the field. The Task Force was comprised of eighteen members, representing the Colorado Departments of Education, Social Services and Health, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, Head Start, the Colorado Community College and Occupational Education System, private sector training organizations and early childhood educators and advocates.

Staffed by First Impressions, the Governor's early childhood initiative, the Task Force met regularly from January to August 1992. **With the assistance of several resource groups, the Task Force developed recommendations and action steps designed to meet their overall goal: to create a model for a career development system for early childhood professionals.** This model addresses standardization of professional requirements and training, seamless articulation among training programs, bridging non-credit and credited programs and the creation of incentives that address wages, benefits and status issues.

The following 4-point agenda is forwarded by the Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force to Governor Romer:

RECOMMENDATION I: **ESTABLISH MECHANISMS NEEDED TO CARRY OUT THE TASK FORCE'S RECOMMENDATIONS**

RECOMMENDATION 2. **ENSURE THAT EVERYONE WORKING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN HAS THE SAME CORE KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCIES REGARDLESS OF WHERE THEY WORK.**

RECOMMENDATION 3: **CREATE A 'SEAMLESS' ARTICULATION PROCESS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS IN SECONDARY, TWO-YEAR, FOUR-YEAR AND GRADUATE INSTITUTIONS AND A MECHANISM WHICH BRIDGES NON-CREDIT AND CREDITED PROGRAMS.**

RECOMMENDATION 4: **ESTABLISH INCENTIVES THAT WILL IMPROVE SALARY, BENEFITS AND STATUS ISSUES.**

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION AND HISTORY

The demand for early childhood care and education programs continues to rise in proportion to the dramatic influx of single and dual-earner families into the workforce. In Colorado, 56 percent of mothers with children under the age of six are employed outside of their homes. Two-thirds of women employed outside their homes are either the sole support of their families or have husbands that make less than $15,000 a year. Approximately 80,000 children under the age of six are cared for in licensed child care centers, preschool programs and family child care homes.

Increased workforce participation by parents also has increased the need for qualified staff, yet there is a critical shortage of trained early childhood educators. The number of people entering the field is at an all time low and more than four out of every ten early childhood educators leave the field annually. Good people leave the field because of low pay, inaccessible training, lack of benefits and respect.

> FACT: A growing body of research shows that children who attend centers with poorly compensated and poorly trained teachers suffer in language and social development. (Child Care Employee Project, 1990)

Quality early care and education is strongly linked to a productive economy. Children who attend quality programs are more likely to complete high school and to go on for further vocational or college training, and are less likely to become teen parents, need special education or welfare services. These positive results reported for model preschool programs with disadvantaged and disabled children are largely related to the specialized early childhood training of the teachers.

> FACT: High quality early care and education programs have staff with the most years of education. (Child Care Employee Project, 1990)

> FACT: Thirty-eight percent of center staff have had no training related to early childhood education. (Child Care Employee Project, 1990)

The implication is clear -- as the need for services continues to grow, Colorado's early care and education system must have the capacity to accommodate the number of children requiring services and to ensure that programs are of high quality and affordable to parents. This cannot be accomplished until professional development issues are addressed.

FACT: In 1989, 96,715 of Colorado's children under the age of six needed child care (care in licensed centers and homes) while the total number of licensed spaces was 82,196. (University of Colorado at Denver Economics Department: Culkin, Helburn and Morris; 1990)

Colorado's system of early care and education is described by many as a "non-system". As is the case across the country, programs are delivered in a wide variety of settings. Some programs are managed by public school systems (e.g., Colorado Preschool Program, Chapter 1), and one is managed by the federal government (Head Start). Others are not managed by public entities but instead are regulated by the Colorado Department of Social Services. These programs are delivered by private for-profit and nonprofit providers in child care centers, family child care homes, community centers and religiously based facilities. Programs are paid for mainly by parents, but the government also subsidizes care on behalf of parents.

While this "non-system" has certain advantages (e.g., parental choice and a variety of service delivery models), it lacks most of the desirable components of a managed system. It has sporadic training and no formal career ladder for staff. It has no integrated strategic planning and development process and consequently cannot keep pace with changes in the field. There is a lack of communication between early childhood and public school educators.

Currently, this poorly integrated system creates road blocks for educators who want to remain in the field and move forward in their profession.

- Because different state and federal departments regulate early childhood programs depending upon settings and funding sources, there is no consistency in staff requirements. Someone who holds a masters degree in early childhood education and is qualified to direct a child care center may not be able to teach a preschool class in a public school.

- **Training for early childhood educators is fragmented. One training program does not accept another program's training. On the job experience is not necessarily valued. There are no established or accepted indicators of quality training. Training is not accessible in all areas of the state and may be prohibitively expensive. When it is available, educators do not always know about it.**

  Further, there is a lack of incentive for increased competency training. Providers have no incentive to invest in professional development in a field where people earn minimum wages.

FACT: In 1988, starting salaries for early childhood educators averaged between $6,808 and $10,342. The poverty threshold for a family of 3 was $9,431. (Colorado Association for the Education of Young Children, 1989)

FACT: Salaries of early childhood education teachers are approximately half that of public elementary school teachers. (United States General Accounting Office, 1990)

- **The early childhood educator lacks a professional identity. Lack of standards that cut across settings and funding streams and that identify the core knowledge and competencies required by the profession undercuts the professionalism of the field.**

- **The cost of early care and education is prohibitive for many parents, and still the nature of the early childhood budget does not allow for adequate compensation for staff. Parents who are paying for care deserve quality services. However, parents have only been able to purchase quality care at affordable rates because educators' low wages serve to subsidize their dollars. If parents had to pay for significant salary increases, early care and education would be priced beyond their ability to pay for it.**

FACT: If early childhood professionals were paid at "comparable worth," parents could expect to pay between 40 percent and 100 percent more for early care and education programs. (University of Colorado at Denver Economics Department: Culkin, Helburn and Morris; 1990)

HISTORY

Initial meeting

In November 1990, First Impressions held a meeting with early care and education professionals to discuss training standards. Included were representatives from Head Start, the Colorado Department of Education, the Colorado Department of Social Services, community colleges, four-year colleges and universities and early childhood professional associations.

As the next step, the group decided to hold a half-day Professional Standards Conference, bringing all stakeholders together to discuss these complex issues. A planning committee was formed and staffed by First Impressions.

Professional Standards Conference

This conference was held in April 1991. Joan Lombardi, a national expert, addressed the 95 participants, speaking on "New Opportunities for Early Childhood Professional Development."

The working groups recommended that Governor Romer establish a task force, comprised of policymakers, legislators, business leaders and professionals to begin planning a career development system in early care and education and to review what is happening in other states and on a national level.

Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force

In response to the working group's request and the critical shortage of qualified early childhood educators, Governor Romer created the Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force, appointing task force members in December 1991.

Task Force members represented the Colorado Departments' of Education, Social Services and Health, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, the Community College and Occupational Education System, Head Start, private sector training organizations and early childhood educators and advocates.

> "As an early childhood educator, I have seen the need for qualified, certified staff increase over the past 10 years. I feel the Task Force has addressed the important issues -- low pay, benefits and professional recognition. My hope is that the recommendations are implemented."
> -- Helen Andresen, President, Colorado Child Care Association

The following Executive Order details the Governor's charge to the Task Force.

CREATION OF THE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS TASK FORCE

WHEREAS, the State of Colorado has adopted an aggressive campaign to assure access to high quality, developmentally appropriate early care and education programs that help prepare children for school;

WHEREAS, demand for early care and education programs has increased due to the rapid growth of single parent families, the increase of mothers entering the workforce and the growing need for two incomes to meet basic economic necessities;

WHEREAS, quality early care and education is strongly linked to a productive economy;

WHEREAS, children who attend quality early care and education programs are more likely to complete high school and to go on for further vocational or college training, and are less likely to become teen parents, need special education or welfare services;

WHEREAS, the expansion of early care and education programs has increased the need for qualified professionals;

WHEREAS, positive results reported on model preschool programs with disadvantaged and disabled children are largely related to the specialized early childhood training of the teachers;

WHEREAS, the key to quality programs for young children lies in professional development for staff;

WHEREAS, there is a critical shortage of early childhood educators with more than 4 out 10 professionals leaving the field every year;

WHEREAS, professionals within early childhood need the same core competencies regardless of their specialized fields;

WHEREAS, early childhood training is fragmented with little articulation across training institutions;

WHEREAS, the State of Colorado is committed to facilitating a career development system for early childhood professionals that includes standardization of professional requirements, seamless articulation among training programs and to developing a model that creates incentives for early care and education professionals to remain in the field;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Roy Romer, Governor of Colorado, by virtue of the authority vested in me under the constitution and laws of Colorado, DO HEREBY ORDER THAT:

1. The Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force is created. It shall consist of no more than 20 members representing Colorado Department of Education, Office of Child Care Services, Head Start, Colorado Commission on Higher Education, Colorado Community College & Occupational Education System, Colorado Department of Health, Public Health Nurses, private sector training organizations, early childhood educator and advocates and parents. All members shall be appointed by the Governor to serve at his pleasure. Members shall serve without compensation. The Governor shall appoint the chairman of the Task Force.

2. The Task Force shall have the following duties:

   a. Develop and maintain policy and procedures for the Task Force's operation.

   b. Determine how to encourage standardization of training and requirements for early care and education professionals regardless of setting.

   c. Identify core knowledge and competencies needed by all early childhood professionals regardless of specialization.

d. Generate ways of incorporate core knowledge and competencies into early childhood training programs.

e. Establish a process of articulation among training programs and degree programs.

f. Explore ways to help professionals cover the cost of training.

g. Develop a dynamic professional system that links entry-level skills and work experience with credentialing and with advanced degree programs.

h. Identify and develop a career development model that creates incentives for early care and education professionals to remain in the field and establishes a strategy which addresses salary, training and status issues.

i. By July 1, 1992, submit recommendations for determining how the Governor and the General Assembly can implement changes in current policy which will encourage a quality workforce in early care and education.

3. The Task Force shall meet at times and in places designated by the chairman. The Task Force and the effect of this Executive Order will terminate on July 1, 1992 unless otherwise extended by this Executive Order.

GIVEN under my hand and the Executive Seal of the State of Colorado this 12th day of September 1991.

Roy Romer
Governor

Upon publication of this report, recommendations from the Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force will be forwarded to the Governor for further action.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCESS

Eighteen Task force members were appointed by Governor Romer. These included high level decision-makers from the Colorado Departments of Education, Social Services and Health, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, Head Start, the Colorado Community College and Occupational Education System, the Colorado Association for the Education of Young Children, the Colorado Association of Family Child Care, the Colorado Child Care Association and private sector training organizations.

Members were chosen to represent large numbers of early childhood professionals through state groups or associations. This allowed many voices to be heard via their representation on the Task Force. Members also were chosen because of their ability to move the Task Force's recommendations forward.

As with all Governor's commissions, committees and task forces, members represented diverse ethnic, cultural and racial populations. An attempt was made to have representatives from different geographical regions of the state.

> "I've been pleased to have input on the development of this early childhood professional system. I cannot stress enough the importance of collaboration and the streamlining of systems."
> -- David Chapa, Assistant Regional Administrator, Office of Family Security, Administration for Children and Families

The chair of the Task Force, Anna Jo Haynes, was chosen because of her long-term commitment to Colorado's children and understanding of the early childhood field. As the director of a nonprofit corporation that provides early care and education to a diverse population of low-income children, Ms. Haynes was keenly aware of the crisis in early childhood.

The goal of the first meeting was to develop guiding principles and a shared vision for the professional development system. Joan Costley from Wheelock College provided a national perspective on these issues and Pauline Koch, from the Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families, described Delaware's plan and the process used to develop it.

"I am encouraged that policy makers and practitioners are beginning to dialogue regarding professional standards in early childhood. There is a great need to coordinate all training to improve our service delivery to young children and their families."
-- Harriet Boone, Professor, School of Education, University of Colorado at Denver

Twenty-six professionals were asked to serve on resource groups to provide technical assistance to the Task Force. Resource members represented many of the same groups as Task Force members. While Task Force members were often policymakers, resource members were often direct service providers.

Resource members were assigned one of the following topics: 1) standardization of training and articulation; 2) core knowledge; 3) the dynamic professional model; and 4) incentives. Many Task Force members also served on a resource group and many resource members worked on more than one topic. Each resource group was facilitated by a member of the Governor's Office staff.

Resource groups researched their assigned topic, identifying concerns, problems, barriers and possible solutions. Members then presented issues and recommendations at subsequent Task Force meetings. When appropriate, the group provided reading material to Task Force members. Each Task Force meeting covered one of the four topics. Resource groups met an average of four times before their presentation to the Task Force.

The Task Force met monthly from January through August 1992. Meetings were working sessions and lasted three hours. Meetings began with a short informational presentation from resource group members. The task force then broke into three small working groups. A facilitator and recorder was assigned to each. Facilitators were members of the resource group, Governor's Office staff were recorders. The groups' assignment was to work on recommendations.

Governor's Office staff then revised recommendations based on input from the meeting and mailed them to Task Force members for review. At the following meeting, these recommendations were discussed, changed if necessary and accepted by the Task Force.

"I believe these are very merited recommendations and long overdue. It is an essential area of policy making."
-- Hal Lewis, Principle Investigator, Faculty Institute Training, University of Colorado Health Sciences Center

SECTION II: STATE AND NATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

STATE PERSPECTIVE

Several innovative initiatives are being undertaken in Colorado which support the Task Force efforts to create an integrated, efficient and quality system of early childhood professional development.

- **The Colorado Achievement Commission,** created by the Colorado General Assembly in 1991, has been charged with recommending goals, standards and objectives to be met by the year 2000 for the Colorado program for achievement in education and training system of the state. The Early Childhood Task Force, chaired by Representative Marlene Fish, is currently writing recommendations to improve the public and private system of early childhood education and provide parents with educational opportunities as they become their child's first teacher. Recommendations will be made to the General Assembly.

  Contact: David Smith, Colorado Department of Education, 866-6861
  Sally Vogler, Governor's Office, 866-2974

- **The Colorado Association for the Education of Young Children** (CAEYC) is the state affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. CAEYC's mission is to act on behalf of the needs, rights and well-being of children, families and early childhood educators. CAEYC holds two statewide conferences annually, sponsors the Week of the Young Child Celebration each April, provides national accreditation support and offers resources to early childhood professionals, parents and policymakers.

  Contact: Dona Kelley, CAEYC President, 779-8794
  Linda Adams, CAEYC Business Manager, 791-2772

- **The Colorado Association of Family Child Care** (CAFCC) offers direct membership benefits to family child care providers throughout the state. The CAFCC Education Foundation offers a number of unique services for family child care providers and early childhood professionals working in other settings. These include training and accreditation opportunities, mentoring programs and a provider resource center mobile lending library.

  Contact: Pat Boulton, CAFCC, 427-6302; Barb Sawyer, CAFCCEF, 450-7297

- **The Colorado Child Care Association** (CCCA) is a nonprofit membership organization consisting of licensed child care centers across Colorado. CCCA is dedicated to providing support and guidance in the management and administration of child care programs through educational training, networking, legislative representation and a referral service.

  Contact: Ann Chandler, CCCA, 860-7174

- **The Colorado Community College and Occupational Education System** (CCCOES) is coordinating a year-long effort to create common course descriptors of early childhood courses offered at community college across the state. Common course description mean course credits will transfer easily from one institution to another. CCCOES also is in the process of working with the Colorado Commission on Higher Education to articulate community college classes with early childhood education programs at four-year institutions.

  Contact: Dale Beckmann, CCCOES, 620-4065; Mary Stecklein, CCCOES, 620-4065

- **The Colorado System of Resource and Referral** provides information on child care and related services to parents, providers, employers and the community. The resource and referral system supports early childhood professional development by offering training or sharing information on training opportunities, national accreditation and credentialing programs and program marketing. Agencies also conduct ongoing community needs assessments, recruit new professionals into the field, assist them through the start-up phase of their businesses and provide ongoing technical assistance.

  Contact: Gail Wilson
  Colorado Office of Resource
  & Referral Agencies
  290-9088

- The newly created **Denver Public Schools/City Joint Council on Early Childhood Care and Education** is comprised of Denver Public School Board members, Denver City Council Members, Mayor's Office staff, community leaders and early childhood advocates. The council has a six-point agenda directed at improving the quality of early childhood programs in the Denver Public Schools. Quality improvement will involve education and training issues and address consistency and continuity of staff.

  Contact: Martha Daley
  Mayor's Office
  640-2731

  Mary Curtis
  Denver Public
  Schools
  322-4745

  Anna Jo Haynes
  Mile High Child
  Care
  388-5700

- **Douglas County Public Schools** is the first school district in the nation to have all of their kindergarten programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. They are currently seeking to accredit all first grade programs.

  Contact: Liz Grams
  Douglas County Public Schools
  688-3195

- **The Early Childhood Professionals for Better Wages** are working to empower early childhood providers as professionals, educate the public about the value of quality care and the importance of who provides that care, and form strong partnerships among providers, parents and the private and public sectors.

  Contact: Laurel Thompson
  Early Childhood Professionals
  for Better Wages
  756-6635

- **Office of Child Care Services** (OCCS), Colorado Department of Social Services has taken several steps over the past few years to improve the quality of child care in Colorado. Based on the understanding that appropriate training is an important way to improve the quality of child care, the Office of Child Care Services has begun to address this issue in a variety of ways: standardizing the review and approval process of training; funding training throughout Colorado; and increasing the training requirements for licensure. The minimum rules and regulations for training for family child care homes has increased to 12 clock hours of training prior to licensure and an additional 12 clock hours every 2 years. The OCCS will contract with child care training organizations to provide statewide training to early childhood staff utilizing federal Child Care and Development Block Grant funds.

  Contact:

  Grace Hardy
  OCCS
  Manager
  866-5961

  Oxana Golden
  OCCS
  Child Care Assistance
  Program Administrator
  866-5958

  Dana Andrews
  OCCS
  Licensing Administrator
  866-5958

NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Several innovative initiatives are being undertaken across the nation that support Colorado's work to resolve early childhood professional development issues.

- **The National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development** is a division of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. The overarching goal of the National Institute is to achieve an articulated professional development system for early childhood education. Several interrelated efforts will be central to the Institute's work, including standard setting, program review, leadership development and information sharing.

  For further information, contact:

  The National Institute for Early Childhood
  Professional Development
  National Association for the Education
  of Young Children
  1834 Connecticut Ave., N.W.
  Washington, DC 20009-5786
  800-424-2460

- **The Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education** addresses issues in the areas of professional development and policy for all program types in the field of early care and education. Established at Wheelock College in 1990, the center will be a vehicle through which Wheelock, in partnership with other national organizations and government policy makers, stimulates and further develops the concept of a dynamic career development system as a model of professionalism.

  For further information, contact:

  The Center for Career Development
  in Early Care and Education
  Wheelock College
  200 The Riverway
  Boston, MA 02215
  617-734-5200

- **The Child Care Employee Project** (CCEP) advocates for improved wages, status and working conditions of child care providers in order to ensure that high quality child care is available to all families regardless of economic status. CCEP provides resources, training and consultation to the child care community.

  For further information, contact:

  Child Care Employee Project
  6536 Telegraph Ave.
  Suite A-201
  Oakland, CA 94609
  510-653-9889

- **The Child Care Action Campaign** has launched a three-year public education project, "Child Care and Education: The Critical Connection." This project seeks to remove the artificial barriers between education and child care.

  For further information, contact:

  Child Care Action Campaign
  330 Seventh Avenue
  17th Floor
  New York, NY 10001
  212-239-0138

SECTION III: GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Task Force developed a set of principles to guide them as they worked on addressing these difficult issues. Task Force members recognized the importance of moving past their own individual concerns and on to the priority of what is "good" for children. The guiding principles were reached through consensus and assured that all task force members had the same vision for this dynamic professional career system. Those principles follow.

Quality early care and education is strongly linked to a constructive society and a productive economy.

The positive results in physical, emotional, social, cognitive and language development reported of model preschool programs with disadvantaged and disabled children are largely related to the specialized early childhood training of the teachers.

A key to quality programs for young children lies in professional development for staff including non-credit training programs from a diversity of trainers, on-site and inservice training and traditional teacher training through colleges.

Children learn in half-day programs and in full day programs. The perceived difference between "preschool" and "child care" needs to be eliminated. Professionals need the same core knowledge and competencies when working with young children. These competencies do not change, regardless of specialization.

Requirements need to be standardized for early care and education professionals regardless of setting (public school, private center, family child care homes, Head Start).

In order to attract and retain people in this field, professionals must be compensated fairly for their work. Early childhood professionals need to earn a living wage and receive benefits.

Throughout the state, a system of training must be available to early care and education professionals:

- Training must be accessible. This includes time, location and cost of training.
- Training must be effective and ongoing. It needs to respect and reflect diversity. Indicators of quality training need to be established.

- Training needs to be identified by content, specific objectives, level of knowledge and skill so that professionals can identify the offerings that are appropriate to their needs.
- Increased training must be acknowledged and documented through an authoritative body such as the Colorado Department of Social Services with linkages to other authoritative bodies (e.g., Colorado Department of Education's teacher certification).
- Early childhood professionals must receive financial incentives and professional recognition for increased competency training.

A career development system or lattice must be dynamic. The system needs to link entry-level skills and work experience with training, credentialing, degree and advanced degree programs.

The system needs to recognize that individuals often move laterally within the profession and to respect those moves.

The career development system must recognize and support the diversity of the professionals within this field. Many enter this field through serendipitous routes with little or no training. One strength of this profession is that members of a child's own community are employed in respected roles in the programs.

There need to be bridges between life experience and competencies, non-credit training, college training and teacher certification programs.

A system of articulation must be established between training institutions such that earned or awarded credits are not lost. Credits from one institution must be accepted as substitute credits at another institution.

Parents, policymakers, legislators, businesses and the general public need to be educated on the costs and benefits of quality early care and education programs.

"Colorado early childhood providers and educators have left our differences behind. We are prepared to move forward to implement a system with standards which will encourage both children and adults to learn in a nurturing environment."
-- Anna Jo Haynes, Director, Mile High Child Care Association

SECTION IV: THE GOAL, RECOMMENDATIONS, ACTION STEPS

Task force members developed recommendations and action steps to standardize and improve the quality of professional preparation and training provided for individuals who care for and educate young children.

GOAL: THE STATE OF COLORADO WILL CREATE A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM THAT IS DYNAMIC, FLUID AND THREE-DIMENSIONAL AND BASED ON THE FOLLOWING ASSUMPTIONS:

- **There are diverse entry points into the field** of early care and education. People entering the field **represent a variety of educational, professional and personal backgrounds.**
- To enter the field, **individuals must have predefined, basic training in core knowledge and competencies.** This training must be accessible to everyone.
- **There are a variety of career options for professionals in the early childhood field:** (See page 24)

A. There Are Different REALMS of Professional Development

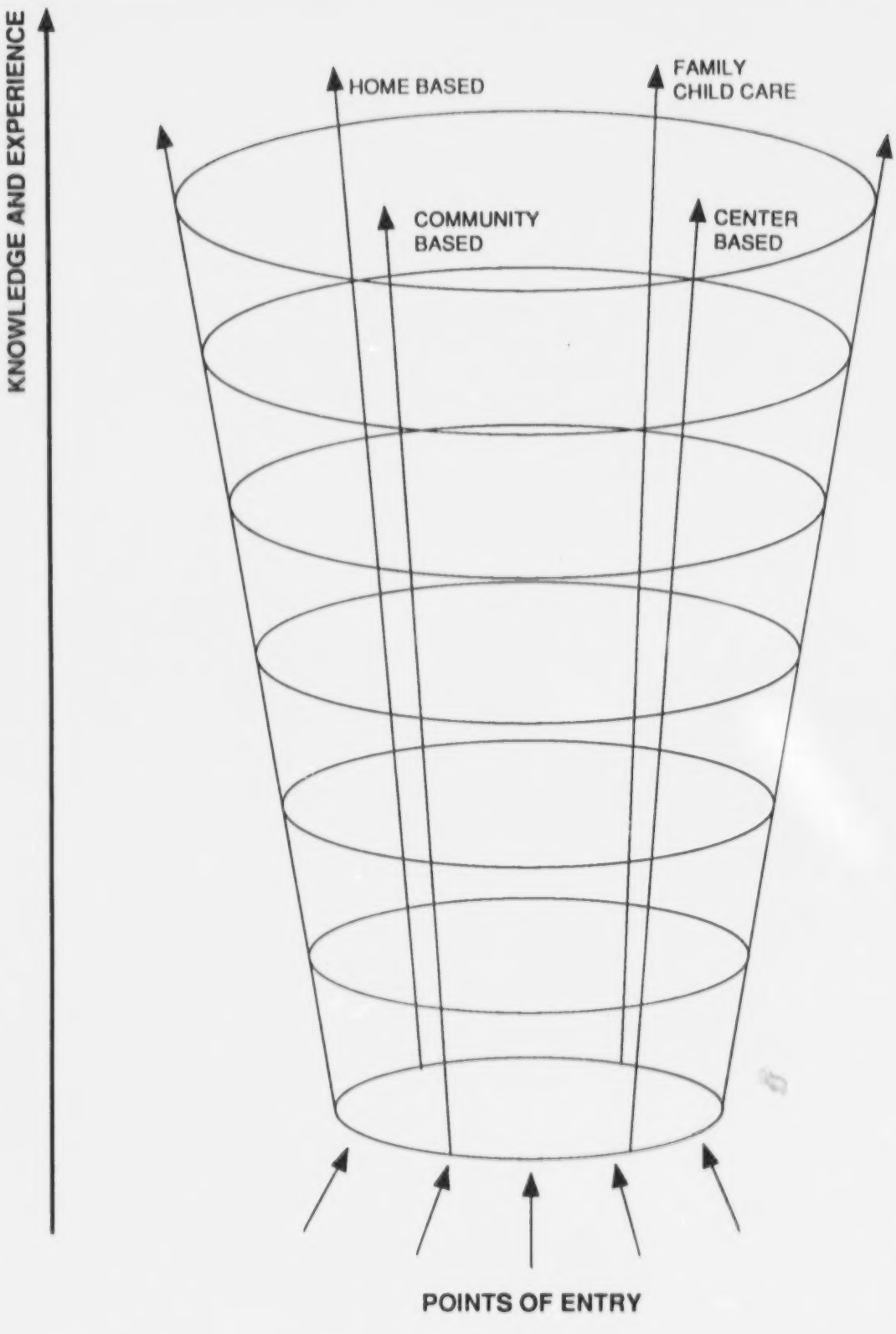
1. those who work with children day to day
2. administrators, trainers and instructors
3. specialists and consultants to those who work with families and children (i.e., referral specialists, regulators, licensing staff)

B. There Are Various LEVELS of Autonomy

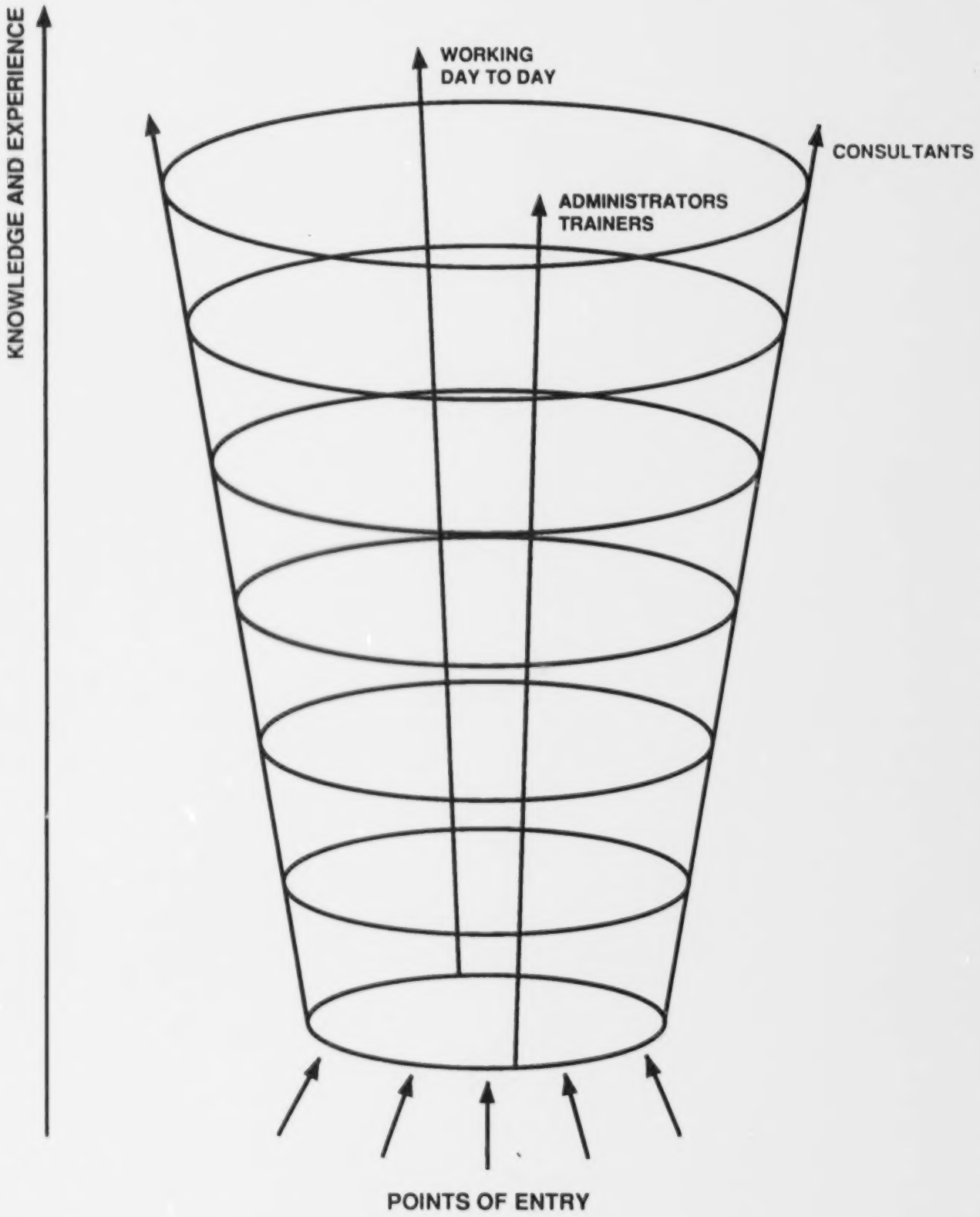
1. working under supervision
2. working independently
3. providing supervision
4. combination of the above

C. There Are Several CONTEXTS of Professional Development

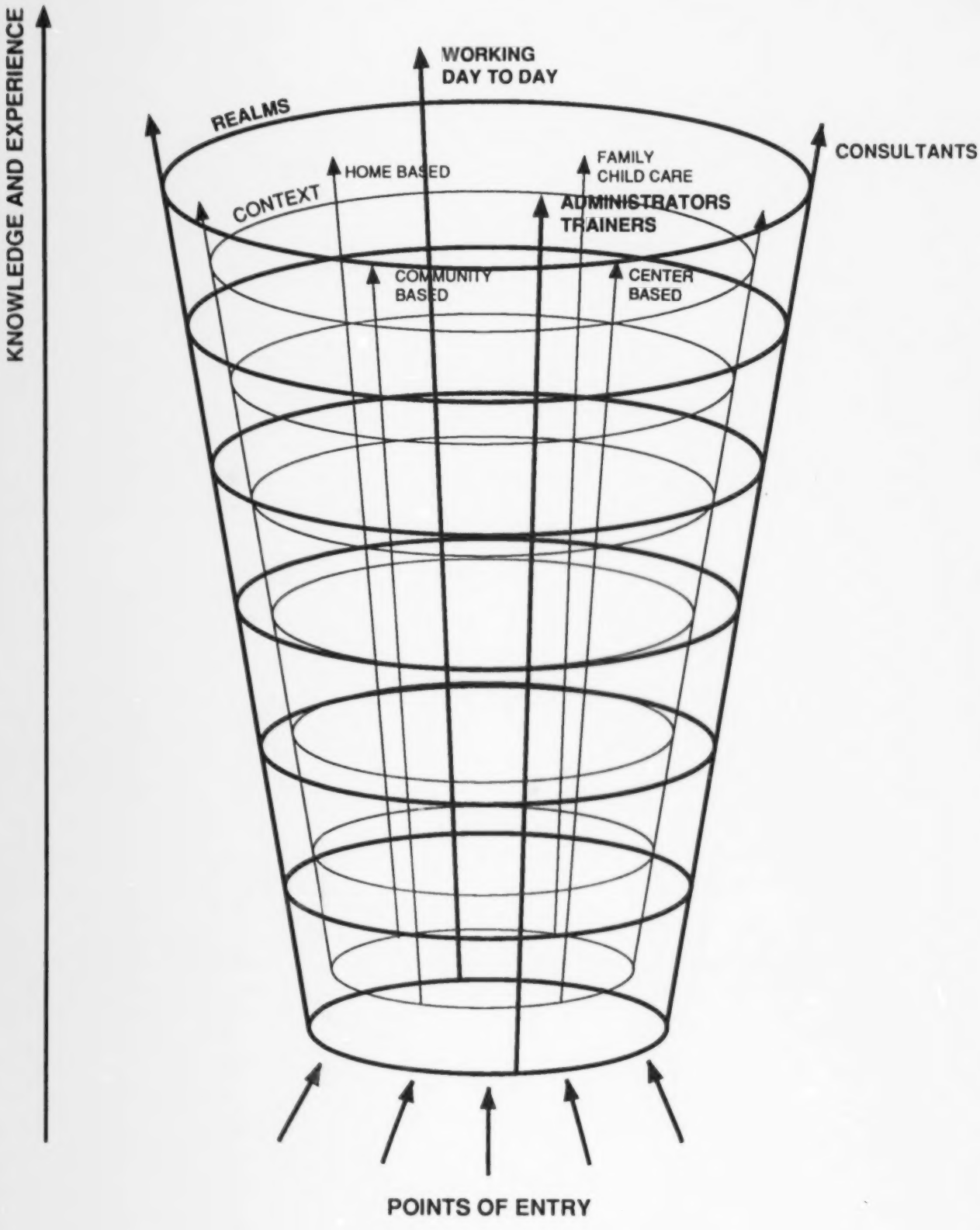
1. center-based
2. school-based
3. family child care
4. home-based
5. community-based


KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE
HOME BASED
FAMILY CHILD CARE
COMMUNITY BASED
CENTER BASED
POINTS OF ENTRY

REALMS


KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE
WORKING
DAY TO DAY
CONSULTANTS
ADMINISTRATORS
TRAINERS
POINTS OF ENTRY

CONTEXT & REALMS



- Professional development is represented in this model as a v-shaped cone. The cone represents the **expanding options available to individuals along the career path.** Expanding options are contingent upon increased knowledge and experience. This same model could be represented as a three dimensional expanding sphere with core knowledge in the center.

- The jungle gym or grid within the body of the cone or sphere represents the variety of ways that **early childhood professionals can move across, up and down and between realms, levels and contexts.**

  This takes into account that core knowledge competencies are standardized and are encompassed by training institutions and that the articulation process recognizing substitutable transfer credit is streamlined; that there is a shared knowledge base for all early childhood professionals; and that early childhood professionals have the ability to build on their experience and education to move into new career realms or contexts.

- **This is a fluid model** because defined knowledge and competencies will be consistent across contexts and realms. (e.g., Someone starting a licensed family child care home will have been trained in the same core knowledge competencies as someone who goes to work as an aide in a licensed child care center. Theoretically, a person who is working as an aide, may stop working in the center and open her own child care home without needing increased training).

- **Wherever you go...there you are.** All realms, levels and contexts are equally valued and essential to the functioning of this evolving system. This system works only when professionals working with children on a day to day basis are as validated, compensated and respected as are those in other realms and contexts.

- **Within each realm, there are different levels of autonomy** (e.g., people who work with children on a day to day basis include aides, educators, master teachers -- these represent three different levels).

- **Each context represents a pole in the jungle gym.** You can move across contexts when your level of experience, knowledge and competencies is equivalent to a professional operating in a different context.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. **REALM**: Refers to the variety of roles played by early childhood professionals. **Realms of Professional Development**
   1. those who work with children day to day
   2. administrators, trainers, instructors
   3. specialists and consultants to those who work with families and children (i.e., referral specialists, regulators, licensing staff)

2. **LEVEL**: Refers to the degree of autonomy in the work environment. **Levels of Autonomy**
   1. working under supervision
   2. working independently
   3. providing supervision
   4. combination of above (working at different levels at the same time)

3. **CONTEXT**: Refers to the setting (public or private) in which early childhood services, resources and programs are delivered. **Context of Professional Development**
   1. center-based
   2. school-based
   3. family child care home
   4. home-based
   5. community-based

4. **Center-based**: Care, education and resources for children and families delivered in a large group setting in a non-residential educational facility such as a school, Head Start program or child care center.

5. **School-based**: Care, education and resources for children and families delivered in a school setting.

6. **Family Child Care-based**: Care, education and resources for children and families delivered in the provider's own home.

7. **Home-based**: Services and resources for children and families delivered in their own homes by in-home providers such as nannies, "sick child" providers, visiting nurses and home visiting programs.

8. **Community-based**: Services and resources for children and families that are part of other specialized services such as training programs at institutions of higher education, recreation center programs, resource and referral services, parent education classes, mental health programs and health care services.

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION STEPS

The following are the Task Force's recommendations and action steps designed to **meet the Task Force's goal to develop a model for an integrated system of professional development for early childhood educators.** The recommendations and action steps identify **core knowledge** needed by all individuals working with young children, methods to ensure **seamless articulation, bridging of non-credit and credit training** and **standardization of training. Incentives** recommendations address salary, benefits and status issues.

Clearly, an effort of this magnitude involves a multi-year implementation process. Implementation of the recommendations will take place over a period of three years. They are designed to lay the groundwork for substantial changes that will occur over a longer period. It is understood that establishing an integrated, comprehensive early childhood professional system is an on-going process that involves buy-in from broad and varied constituencies including parents, educators, business and government. It also is understood that buy-in for this systemic change is dependent upon communities' commitment to these issues.

All of the recommendations are dependent on the volunteer work of many people, particularly representatives from professional associations, government agencies and nonprofit entities including:

The Colorado Child Care Association
The Colorado Assoc. for the Education of Young Children
The Colorado Assoc. of Family Child Care
The Colorado Education Association
The Colorado Child Care Coalition
The Colorado Children's Campaign
The Colorado Commission on Higher Education
The Colorado Community College and Occupational Education System
The Colorado Department of Education
The Colorado Department of Health
The Colorado Department of Social Services
The Colorado Forum
The Colorado Head Start Directors' Association
The Colorado Office of Resource and Referral Agencies
The Early Childhood Professionals for Better Wages
The Governor's Office

It is acknowledged that certain costs are associated with the recommendations.

"There must be a clear message that working with young children is a profession of great importance to our society. There must be a clear path to achieving the highest degree of competence within our profession and this competence must be rewarded. These standards start us on that road."
-- David Smith, Director, High Risk Intervention Unit, Colorado Department of Education

RECOMMENDATION I: ESTABLISH MECHANISMS NEEDED TO CARRY OUT THE TASK FORCE'S RECOMMENDATIONS

Action Steps

1.1 **Continue Governor Romer's Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force to function as an ongoing advisory and policy-making group in carrying out recommendations.** This group will meet semi-annually and provide linkages to other state early childhood task forces and advisory councils. After Year Three, the Task Force will be institutionalized within an existing organization outside the Governor's Office.

1.2 **Establish a Colorado Legislative Consortium to create an early childhood legislative agenda for the state.** It will be comprised of parents, legislators and representatives from the early childhood and special education communities, the private sector and the public schools. A paid facilitator, not connected with the Governor's Office, will facilitate the process which will include education on effective advocacy strategies for children. The group's focus will be goal-driven and address many issues relating to incentives.

1.3. **Establish an Incentives Work Group, staffed by the Governor's Office, to formulate specific recommendations for the Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force.** Based on their findings, the Task Force also will work with the Legislative Consortium to initiate a plan to increase funding for salaries and benefits at the local, state and federal level.

1.4 **Establish a Early Childhood Training Clearinghouse within the Office of Child Care Services to coordinate and approve early childhood related training.**

CORE KNOWLEDGE AND STANDARDIZATION RECOMMENDATION

Required competencies of early childhood staff vary greatly from setting to setting. Different programs (e.g., Head Start, Chapter 1 programs, child care centers) are regulated by different federal and state agencies, each of which has its own requirements on staff qualifications. The lack of consistent requirements has contributed to a fragmented system and lack of professional identity. The training and understanding needed when working with young children does not change when a professional moves from one early childhood setting to another.

At-risk children who attend high quality early care and education programs are more likely to complete high school and to go on to further vocational or college training. These same children are less likely to become teen parents or require special education or welfare services. **It is important to note that positive outcomes are associated with high quality preschool programs staffed by early childhood professionals with specialized training and understanding of how young children learn.**

To have a fluid professional system, required competencies must be consistent from one setting to another regardless of the regulatory agency involved. The dilemma is how to ensure that the diverse population of early childhood staff, especially those from a child's own community, are supported in their role as a professional, while raising the standards of program quality through training and increased qualifications.

The following recommendation and action steps identify seven areas of core knowledge needed by everyone working with young children and ensure the standardization of training and professional qualifications.

RECOMMENDATION 2: ENSURE THAT EVERYONE WORKING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN HAS THE SAME CORE KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCIES REGARDLESS OF WHERE THEY WORK.

CORE KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCIES

I. **Child Growth and Development**
Understanding of patterns and stages of a child's physical, emotional, social, language and cognitive development.

Recognition of delays in development that suggest a child is exhibiting indicators of a disability and would need further assessment.

II. Healthy Safe Environment

A. Medical Wellbeing

Understanding of appropriate emergency medical procedures.

Knowledge of symptoms of common early childhood illnesses.

Knowledge and implementation procedures of universal health precautions

B. Nutrition

Understanding of nutritional needs of young children as specified by the United States Department of Agriculture.

Knowledge of how to plan for the nutritional needs of children with special dietary or cultural requirements.

Knowledge of the various supplemental food programs.

C. Creating a safe, healthy environment

Knowledge of how to plan for both indoor and outdoor space that is safe, welcoming, child-centered and takes into account what is known about the effects of light, color, space and textures on child fatigue and stress (ergonomically sound practice).

D. Child Protection

Knowledge and recognition of the overt and subtle signs or indicators of child abuse and neglect.

Knowledge of designated child abuse hot line in the community.

Knowledge of state statutes regarding the responsibilities of reporting child abuse.

III. Developmentally Appropriate Practices

Understanding that a nurturing environment promotes the physical, social, emotional and cognitive development of young children.

Developmentally appropriate practice applies to four components of early childhood programs: curriculum, adult to child ratios, relations between home and program and developmental evaluation of children. This is both age-appropriate and individual-appropriate.

IV. Guidance

Understanding the whole range of adult responses that support the development of children's internal control of their own behavior. This would include: responding quickly to children's needs, providing varied opportunities for children to communicate, providing support and encouragement that allows children to finish tasks, modeling respectful behavior, initiating and encouraging problem solving.

V. Family Relationships

Understanding, respecting and accepting the cultural, racial and socio-economic influence that is unique to each child.

Valuing the family as the child's first and most important teacher in the early years and understanding how to work in partnership with parents to achieve the best results for each child.

Awareness of various sources of family stress such as alcohol and drug abuse, teen parenting.

Knowledge of community resources for families.

VI. Cultural and Individual Diversity

Integrating respect for and valuing of the cultural, racial, gender, socio-economic and physical ability differences in our society.

Knowledge of anti-biased curricula which enables every child: to construct a knowledgeable, confident self-identity; to develop comfortable, empathetic and just interaction with diverse populations; and to develop critical thinking and the skills for standing up for oneself and others in the face of injustice.

VII. Professionalism

Understanding of all the applicable laws, regulations and ethics pertaining to the early childhood profession.

An awareness and understanding of the importance of continued skill development through ongoing training, involvement in professional organizations and advocacy efforts.

Accessing continued individual growth and self awareness opportunities and ongoing self assessment.

CORE KNOWLEDGE	Educator	Assistant	FCC Entry	FCC Level 2	FCC Accred-ited	Director	Infant Toddler Super.	Infant Toddler Ed.	School Age Ed.	Specialist
Child Growth and Development	3	1	1	2	3	3	3	3	1	1
Healthy Safe Environment	3	1	1	2	3	3	3	3	1	1
Developmentally Appropriate Practices	3	1	1	2	3	3	3	3	1	1
Guidance	3	1	1	2	3	3	3	3	1	1
Family Relationships	3	1	1	2	3	3	3	3	1	1
Cultural and Individual Diversity	3	1	1	2	3	3	3	3	1	1
Professionalism	3	1	1	2	3	3	3	3	1	1
Fiscal Management			1	2	3	3				
Personnel Management						1				
Supervision Skills	1					3	2			
Middle Years Development									1	
Infant/Toddler							2	1		

Bolded areas are the core knowledge areas identified by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
1,2,3 indicates the varying (minimum) levels needed, with 1 being the basic and 3 the highest

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"As a nurse practitioner, I am well aware of the interrelation of all aspects of a child's life to her emotional well-being. It is essential to have standards that attempt to ensure quality in those arenas."
-- Courtney Thomas, Director, Well Child and EPSDT Programs, Colorado Department of Health

Action Steps

2.1 **With input from a group of stakeholders, the Training Clearinghouse (as defined in Recommendation 1) will provide the following functions:**

- **Approval of non-credited training that supports the career development model, covers core knowledge and meets staffing requirements.** The approval process would include such things as content, materials and trainer qualifications;

- **Establish indicators of core knowledge competencies for different professionals that complement the Colorado Department of Education's Standards for Quality Early Childhood Services** (i.e., identify how knowledge and competencies are measured for differing levels within the field -- assistant teacher, teacher).

- **Maintain a computer registry of early childhood personnel** as they add additional training and experience;

- **Develop criteria for early childhood trainers and maintain profiles of trainers in a computer database.**

2.2 **The Departments of Social Services, Education, Health and Institutions will review and revise early childhood personnel standards and regulations based on the three levels of core knowledge.**

- **Newly licensed family child care educators will have a minimum of 12 hours of training that cover Level 1 of core knowledge and competencies.** This will be ongoing in nature moving from Level 1 through Level 2 & 3. Level 3 will be consistent with National Association of Family Day Care accreditation.

- **Learning assistants will have a minimum of 12 hours of training that covers Level 1 of core knowledge and competencies.** Teaching assistant training should be the same as the training for beginning (entry level) family child care educators.

- **Directors will have Level 3 of the core knowledge and competencies plus basic fiscal management, supervisory skills and personnel management.**

- **Infant and toddler educators will have additional training on the care, nurturing and stimulation of infants and toddlers.** The Social Service training requirement of 80 hours should be consistent for center staff and infant/toddler homes.

"The Office of Child Care Services is ready to make the needed changes in our child care licensing process and rules that would reflect the concerns and best thinking of this Task Force."
-- Grace Hardy, Manager, Office of Child Care Services, Colorado Department of Social Services

- **Personnel working in school-aged programs will have training in Level 1 of core knowledge and competencies plus additional training in the development of and appropriate practices for children five through twelve years old.**

- **Early childhood educators moving into school-aged programs will have additional training on the development of and appropriate practices for children five through twelve years of age.**

- **Special needs educators working with young children will have training in core knowledge and competencies,** Level 1 plus their specialty training.

- **Ongoing training (continuing education) will be a requirement for all levels of the profession.**

- **Personnel standards based on core knowledge will be consistent in public schools, in early care and education programs and in developmental disabilities programs.**

2.3 **The Colorado Office of Resource and Referral will maintain a computerized statewide calendar of available training.**

2.4 **The Colorado Commission on Higher Education and the Colorado Department of Education will coordinate early childhood certification standards and early childhood special education certification standards** (this implies review and revision). Child growth and development must be a mandatory course in any degree or certificate program.

2.5 **The Colorado Department of Social Services' "Colorado Child Care Assistance Program" reimbursement rates will be tied to the quality of the program.**

1. The lowest reimbursement rate will be paid to centers and homes meeting the minimum rules and regulations.

2. The second level of reimbursement rate will be paid to centers and homes that have started an approved national accreditation process.

3. The highest reimbursement rate will be paid to centers and homes that have completed the accreditation process.

2.6 **The Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force will continue ongoing working relationship with the National Association for the Education of Young Children's National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development; Wheelock College's Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education; the National Child Care Association; and the National Association of Family Day Care.**

2.7 **The Colorado Departments of Social Services, Institutions and Education will use the term early childhood educator** instead of "teacher" or "group leader."

"These recommendations and action steps build upon the diverse training opportunities in early care and education in Colorado."
-- Vera Montez, Past-President, Colorado Association of Family Child Care

ARTICULATION RECOMMENDATION

The lack of articulation among training programs is a significant barrier to ongoing professional development. Early Childhood professionals rarely are awarded credit for previous learning (learning through work experience or non-credit classes). Presently, a system of individual assessment that can award credit for prior learning is in place through the Colorado Community College and Occupational Education System and four-year baccalaureate granting institutions. While this is a step in the right direction, there still are barriers for early childhood staff. Many who enter the early childhood field come from the same community and share similar cultural and economic backgrounds with the children they care for and educate. They may not have had much experience with institutions of higher education that may represent other cultural values nor with the bureaucratic maze of getting into school and with the time consuming process of proving what they have learned. A "student friendly" system must be sensitive to cultural style and economic circumstance.

Presently, non-credit training programs are inconsistent and spotty. Training content is often repetitive and does not build on what the early childhood professional has already learned. There is no way of assessing the quality or context of the training or the qualifications of the trainer, nor is there an approved system for individuals to record the training they have completed. There must be a way for non-credit training to fit automatically into credit training programs.

Many educators are frustrated when they try to pursue a degree in early childhood and find that many of the credited classes they have taken are not accepted in transfer or as articulated credit at another college or university. These credits may be transferred but often only as elective credits. Articulated credit refers to the ability to have a class and its credits count towards fulfilling a degree requirement.

The Colorado General Assembly instructed the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) to develop a transfer policy. The policy and general procedures were accepted by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education in 1988. The transfer policy means that every community college must have individual transfer agreements with each and every four year college and university in Colorado. A community college can have up to 14 individual agreements. Since each agreement is worked out by the heads of individual departments at each institution on a yearly basis, this system has led to inconsistencies from school to school. While CCHE's transfer policy lays the groundwork for articulated transfer credit, the present system must be streamlined to ensure consistency, continuity and quality of articulated early childhood credit.

"It is imperative that statewide professional standards be established for people who work with Colorado's most precious resource -- our young children."
-- Mary Curtis, Supervisor, Early Childhood Education, Denver Public Schools.

RECOMMENDATION 3: CREATE A SEAMLESS ARTICULATION PROCESS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS IN SECONDARY, TWO-YEAR, FOUR-YEAR AND GRADUATE INSTITUTIONS AND A MECHANISM WHICH BRIDGES NON-CREDIT AND CREDITED PROGRAMS.

Action Steps

3.1 **The Office of Child Care Services will complete a comprehensive survey of available early childhood training in Colorado.**

3.2 **The Office of Child Care Services will complete a comprehensive early childhood training needs assessment for all levels of staff from practitioners to administrators.**

3.3 **The Training Clearinghouse will work with the Colorado Community College and Occupational Education System and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education to develop a statewide standardized method of converting non-credit training to credited training** (i.e., an articulation model).

3.4 **The Colorado Community College and Occupational Education System and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education will assume leadership in working with the Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force and the Training Clearinghouse to implement a statewide articulation process among secondary, two-year, four-year and graduate institutions that recognizes articulated transfer credit.**

INCENTIVES RECOMMENDATION

Not surprisingly, the issue of incentives for professional development was the most difficult for Task Force members to address. It was helpful for the group to frame the discussion by first agreeing on a broad definition of "incentives" and why they are needed, and then identifying current barriers to creating them.

What are incentives?

Incentives are strategies to create impetus and substantial motivation for individuals to choose a career as an early childhood educator, to seek training that will improve program quality and to remain in the field. Incentives are created in order to attract and retain the best people in the field. Incentives do not translate only to wages and benefits, although this is clearly the overarching issue. Other incentives are contingent on resolution of the wage and benefits issues and include status, recruitment, retention, quality and training.

Why do we need incentives?

- **As the demand for early care and education continues to grow, resources aren't adequate to meet demand for programs.** An inadequate labor pool and high turnover (40-60 percent annually) seriously undermines our ability to make programs available to families who need them.

- **Good early childhood programs are good for children -- bad ones are detrimental.** Quality programs are characterized by staff who have received early childhood related training. Yet, the National Child Care Staffing Study (1989) showed that 38 percent of center staff have had no training related to early childhood education.

- **Early care and education is the second lowest paid profession in the United States.** Many providers make less than parents who receive financial assistance through Social Services to purchase care; many Head Start teachers would meet eligibility criteria for Head Start.

"Each young child in Colorado deserves quality early care and education. Each early childhood teacher deserves a living wage. The two are directly related. When 41% of early care and education teachers leave the field annually, the quality of the child's care is in jeopardy. We must do better for teachers and children."
-- Dona Kelley, President, Colorado Association for the Education of Young Children

What are the current barriers to creating incentives?

Resource group and Task Force members identified several major barriers to building support for incentives. Barriers revolve around:

- **Public perception** -- "Quality" is an elusive concept. Many people still believe that anyone is qualified to work with young children and that specialized training is unnecessary. Early childhood education and child care are viewed as discreet fields.

- **Systems issues** -- The early childhood delivery system is fragmented. Consequently, educators do not see themselves as sharing the same issues or as part of a common effort to improve working conditions.

- **Economics** -- Without significant governmental investment, the cost of salary increases to early childhood staff would be passed along to parents -- pricing most parents out of the market.

"I feel that these incentives are critical for promoting and maintaining quality. It is imperative that we put children first. We must keep moving toward this goal."
-- Kathy Gregg, Instructor, Career Center, Mesa County Valley Schools

RECOMMENDATION 4: ESTABLISH INCENTIVES THAT WILL IMPROVE SALARY, BENEFITS AND STATUS ISSUES.

The incentives recommendation will be carried out by The Colorado Legislative Consortium and the Incentives Work Group as identified in Recommendation I.

Action Steps

Compensation/Benefits

4.1 **The Legislative Agenda developed by the Colorado Legislative Consortium will build awareness among the general public and the General Assembly of the pressing need to improve salaries and working conditions for early childhood educators. Further, it will increase effectiveness in lobbying for increased funding and create a shared vision in the early childhood community.**

The group will consider proactive legislation at the local, state and federal level which may include advocating for a variety of programs and financial commitment.

Examples:

State: creation of a salary enhancement program; increased funding for the Colorado Preschool Program; increased funding for the statewide system of child care resource and referral; the creation of state income tax credits for early childhood educators; new funding for an early childhood educators' benefits plan; capacity to tie Social Service reimbursement rate increases to staff salary increases and accreditation status; establishment of a constitutional amendment relating to rights of the child; and, the creation of a quality improvement fund.

Federal: increased and continued funding to Head Start, Title XX, the Family Support Act (including JOBS Training), Title IVA, the Child Care and Development Block Grant, the Dependent Care Block Grant and the Higher Education Act as it relates to early care and education.

4.2 **The Incentives Work Group will research and identify strategies that have successfully increased funding to specific populations.** Efforts may include: exploring American Federation of Teachers, National Education Association and public health nurses' strategies to increase salaries; identifying American Association of Retired Persons advocacy strategies; researching productive union efforts and models used in other countries, alternative staffing models and effective salary enhancement programs. Recommendations will be made to the Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force for future action.

4.3 **The Incentives Work Group will work with the Colorado Office of Resource and Referral Agencies and professional associations to investigate the development of an early childhood "cooperative".** Based on the assumption that large group purchases reduce the cost of a variety of goods and services, the cooperative could address the need for free or reduced price bus passes; free or reduced parking costs; reimbursement for costs associated with Colorado Bureau of Investigation and Federal Bureau of Investigation checks; equipment, food and supplies at discounted rates; reduced cost of membership and conference registration; a group health care plan; and a group insurance program. Recommendations will be made to the Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force for future action.

4.4 **Early childhood organizations will place compensation at the top of their agendas and not take it off until the issue is resolved.** Professional Associations will take a more active lobbying role. Further, these organizations will actively endorse and support the "Worthy Wage Campaign" and NAEYC's "Full Cost of Care."

4.5 **The Governor's office will work in conjunction with the Early Childhood Professionals for Better Wages, representatives from the public schools, the Colorado Department of Education, the Colorado Department of Social Services and professional associations to host a conference and distribute information to early childhood educators on effective advocacy strategies.** The intent is to empower early childhood educators and create a strong and united voice for change.

4.6 **The Colorado Office of Resource and Referral Agencies will work with professional associations, including the Early Childhood Professionals for Better Wages, to educate parents on the full cost of care and education.** This could include coordination of public events that focus attention on early care and education funding issues, (e.g., sending parents "full cost of care and education bills"; charging parents for one day of care at full cost of quality; developing or distributing a brochure for parents; and organizing a "take your child to work" campaign.

4.7 **The Governor's Office, local resource and referral agencies and other community agencies will continue to educate businesses on the value of investment in early childhood programs and the importance of compensation and seek input from the business community on strategies to improve working conditions for early childhood educators.**

4.8 **Professional associations will continue to work with the public school system to achieve equal pay for early childhood providers working in the public school system.** It is understood that this can be accomplished only with the buy-in of several constituencies including the general public, the Colorado Achievement Commission, the Colorado Association of School Boards, The Colorado Department of Education and the Colorado Education Association.

It is understood that this is only one step needed to carry out the intent of the Task Force recommendations which are designed to create a system which offers comparable pay across sectors and supports a diverse delivery system.

Training/Quality

4.9 **The Governor's Office, the Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force, the Colorado Departments of Higher Education, Social Services, Health, Institutions and Education will develop and implement a strategy to make training relevant, accessible and affordable to all early childhood professionals** in order for them to meet core knowledge, competencies and the requirement changes within five years.

4.10 **Funding will be increased for the Colorado System of Resource and Referral to provide recruitment and training.**

4.11 **The Incentives Work Group will work in conjunction with the Colorado Student Loan Program, Higher Education, the Colorado General Assembly, the JOBS Training program through Social Services, the Governor's Job Training Office and local businesses to investigate potential for the development of a scholarship fund, loan assumption and/or a forgiveness program for early childhood professionals.** To support this effort, the Incentives Work Group will conduct a comparative wage study.

Recommendations will be made to the Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force for future action.

"Adequate training is the key to retention and quality care. When it comes to our children, we cannot afford to sacrifice quality."
-- Gail Wilson, Executive Director, Colorado Office of Resource and Referral Agencies

4.12 **The Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force will work in cooperation with the Legislative Consortium to lobby for the creation of a Quality Improvement Fund appropriated by the Colorado General Assembly. This fund may address training and other quality-related issues for early childhood educators including monies earmarked to support national accreditation processes for both centers and family child care educators, and funds directed to the creation of a team of child development specialists, including parents, to provide on-site training and technical assistance to early childhood educators.**

4.13 **The Colorado Office of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies will work with the Office of Child Care Services, local agencies and professional associations to create a reliable source of substitute care for early childhood educators. This may involve outreach to existing private sector employment agencies.**

4.14 **The Office of Child Care Services will revisit and revise existing regulations to ensure consistency in the licensing process. Particular attention should be paid to the rules and regulations that are consistent across settings. This involves:**

- Making state Rules and Regulations more user-friendly;
- Making information on licensing more readily accessible;
- Printing regulations in other languages;
- Developing a companion brochure on the licensing process;
- Striving for more consistent application of regulations;
- Increasing relevant training to licensing specialists, including internship in a center or home;
- Creating regulation for ongoing training or for accountability on implementing a staff training plan; and,
- Creating a one-stop shopping model with local resource and referral agencies acting as licensing "guides" for family child care educators.

"It is necessary to increase the pool of talented people who enter this field. These recommendations go a long way toward building the incentives and standardized training that can accomplish this."
-- Ken Seeley, Director, Colorado Family Preservation

4.15 **The Colorado Office of Resource and Referral Agencies and professional associations will work together to create an "Early Childhood Professional's Bill of Rights and Code of Ethics." This bill of rights will include workplace standards for educators as well as children.**

4.16 **Based on this bill, the authors will work with the Office of Child Care Services to develop and revise regulations, and with the Legislative Consortium to work for statute changes and new legislation that address satisfactory work environments.** These may include:

- Appropriate staff development opportunities;
- Paid vacation and sick leave time;
- Insurance benefits;
- Access to quality training;
- Access to a phone;
- Access to a staff lounge;
- Minimum amount of funding for equipment supplies;
- Minimum amount of planning time.

4.17 **Mentoring, touring and accreditation programs will be institutionalized and supported.** This effort should be tied into existing training systems as part of core knowledge and standardization and articulation of training.

"Teacher training programs must fuse theory and practices. Teachers learn by teaching under the guidance of experienced mentors."
-- Carolyn Hambidge, Executive Director, Stanley British Primary School, Teacher Training Program

APPENDIX A: TASK FORCE AND RESOURCE MEMBERS

TASK FORCE MEMBERS

Bea Romer
First Lady of Colorado

Helen Andresen
President,
Colorado Child Care Association

Dale Beckmann
Director of Instruction,
Colorado Community College and
Occupational Education Systems

Harriet Boone
Professor,
School of Education
University of Colorado at Denver

David Chapa
Assistant Regional Administrator,
Office of Family Security
Administration for Children and Families

Mark Chisholm
Senior Information and
Research Officer,
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Mary Curtis
Supervisor,
Early Childhood Education
Denver Public Schools

Kathy Gregg
Instructor,
Career Center
Mesa County Valley Schools

Carolyn Hambidge
Executive Director,
Stanley British Primary School

Grace Hardy
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Mile High Child Care Association

Dona Kelley
President,
Colorado Association for the
Education of Young Children

Hal Lewis
Principal Investigator,
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Vera Montez
President,
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Ken Seeley
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Colorado Family Preservation

David Smith
Director,
High Risk Intervention Unit
Colorado Department of Education

Courtney Thomas
Director,
Well Child and EPSDT Programs
Family and Community Health
Services Division
Colorado Department of Health

Gail Wilson
Executive Director,
Colorado Office of Resource
and Referral Agencies

Staff: **Kathleen Shindler**
Governor's Office
First Impressions

STANDARDIZATION AND ARTICULATION RESOURCE GROUP MEMBERS

Dale Beckmann
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Colorado Community College and
Occupational Education System

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Early Childhood Coordinator,
Northeastern Junior College

Brenda Duncan
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Vera Montez
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Diana Range
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Colorado Community College and
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Kathleen Shindler, facilitator
Special Projects Coordinator,
Governor's Office
First Impressions

CORE KNOWLEDGE RESOURCE GROUP MEMBERS

Linda Flynn
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JFK Center for Developmental Disabilities
University of Colorado Health Sciences Center

Debbie Jump
Director,
Auraria Child Care Center

Sylvia Kreider
Preschool Coordinator
Adams County School District 14

Molly McNally-Dunn
School-Aged Programs Coordinator,
Red Rocks Community College

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Policy Analyst,
Governor's Office
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Colorado Department of Education

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National INREAL Outreach
Education Center
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Meera Mani
Assistant to the President,
Clayton Foundation

Sandy Shaimo
Vice President,
Windflower Enterprises, Inc.

Danelle Young
Director,
Child Health Services
Colorado Department of Health

Mimi Howard, facilitator
Parents As First Teachers Coordinator,
Governor's Office
First Impressions

INCENTIVES RESOURCE GROUP MEMBERS

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Lake County School District R-1

Martha Daley
Director,
Mayor's Office of Child Care Initiatives

Debbie Jump
Director,
Auraria Child Care Center

Niki Mitchell,
Teacher,
Douglas County Public Schools
Early Childhood Professionals for Better Wages

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Regional Access Project
University of Colorado
at Denver

Gail Wilson
Director,
Colorado Office of Resource
and Referral Agencies

Sally Vogler, facilitator
Deputy Director,
Governor's Office
First Impressions

APPENDIX B: LETTERS OF SUPPORT

National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development
A division of the National Association for the Education of Young Children

1834 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20009
202-232-8777 800-424-2460 FAX 202-328-1846

August 4, 1992

Honorable Roy Romer
Governor, State of Colorado
Executive Chambers
136 State Capitol
Denver, Colorado 80203-1792

Dear Governor Romer:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the work of your Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force. As always, it is exciting to learn of Colorado's initiatives to meet the care and education needs of young children in your state. I am writing to strongly support the Task Force's recommendations. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) applauds the work of the Task Force in developing recommendations and guiding principles that reflect national trends to improve early childhood professional preparation and development.

NAEYC has recently launched a major initiative designed to improve the quality of early childhood services through the improvement of the professional preparation and training provided for individuals who care for and educate young children. The Colorado plan is highly congruent with the model system of professional preparation and development promoted by NAEYC. We strongly support several key elements of Colorado's plan:

> The recognition that there is a specialized body of knowledge which all individuals who work with young children must possess to be effective in providing high-quality care and education.
>
> Flexibility in assisting the educational development of adults seeking to work with young children. Most important is the recognition that a wide range of preparation programs exist among secondary, two-, four-year and graduate institutions making articulation of course credit imperative in helping individuals to continue to have access to programs that will meet their educational needs.
>
> The acknowledgement of the need for continuing education that reflects currency in research, trends, and practices relevant to the care and education of young children.
>
> Inclusion of work with parents, policy makers, legislators and the public to facilitate understanding of the costs and benefits of quality early childhood programs.

The establishment of incentives that not only seek to improve the quality of early childhood programs but to improve the salary, benefits, and professional status of those qualified individuals who choose to work with young children.

The work completed by the Task Force represents an excellent beginning. We look forward to hearing more about the results of the Task Force's efforts. Please keep us informed and do not hesitate to call if we can provide additional support or be of further assistance.

Sincerely yours,

Sue Bredekamp

Sue Bredekamp
Director of Professional Development

Families and **Work** Institute

Ellen Galinsky
Co-President

August 14, 1992

The Honorable Roy Romer
State of Colorado
Executive Chambers
136 State Capitol
Denver, Colorado 80203-1792

Dear Governor Romer:

The training of teachers and caregivers is strongly linked to the quality of care and education that children in child care receive. Thus, the absence of systematic training for early childhood professionals is very costly.

The Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force has created a unique model, one that addresses the current problems of fragmentation, the lack of articulation, the gaps between non-credit and credited programs, and the unevenness of the training itself. This model moves the field forward, making what seemed difficult or impossible not only possible but do-able.

I commend the State of Colorado for making an innovative, creative, substantive contribution to the early childhood field.

Sincerely,

Ellen Galinsky

Ellen Galinsky
Co-President

EG/bn

330 Seventh Avenue, New York, New York 10001 (212) 465 2044 Fax (212) 465 8637

Children's Defense Fund

August 7, 1992

The Honorable Roy Romer
Executive Chambers
136 State Capitol
Denver, Colorado 80203-1792

Dear Governor Romer:

The Children's Defense Fund believes that high quality child care and early childhood development programs are an essential component of any school readiness agenda. We also believe that the quality of these programs is intimately linked to the interactions between staff and young children. Training is a key determinant of these staff-child interactions and of the quality of child development programs. Therefore, we strongly support the recommendations of Colorado's Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force.

We are pleased that the recommendations recognize the fact that children learn in both half-day and full day programs. A school readiness plan cannot be limited solely to enhancing the quality of part-day programs with so many mothers of young children now working outside the home. We also appreciate the report's sensitivity to the diversity of the child development field, the importance of making training accessible to child care workers, and the need to create a meaningful career ladder through a well-designed training system.

The Task Force report is yet another example of Colorado's thoughtful approach to the issue of school readiness and effective child care and child development programs. We commend you for this effort.

Sincerely,

Helen Blank

Helen Blank
Director, Child Care

HB/rm

25 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
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Fax 202 662 3510

6536 Telegraph Avenue
Suite V-201
Oakland, California
94609-1114

510.653.9889
FAX 510.653.8885

August 20, 1992

Governor Romer
First Impressions
136 Capitol Building
Denver, CO 80202

Dear Governor Romer:

I have recently read with interest the Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force report. On behalf of the Child Care Employee Project, I urge you to facilitate the implementation of the Task Force recommendations. In particular I support the recommendation calling for incentives that will improve salary, benefits and status issues of those caring for young children.

The Child Care Employee Project is a national resource and advocacy organization seeking to improve the quality of child care services by upgrading the wages and working conditions of child care staff. Poverty level wages fuel high turnover which results in inconsistent caregiving environments for young children. In 1989 the Child Care Employee Project released *The National Child Care Staffing Study* which documented the direct link between the child care work environment and the quality of care children receive. Centers paying higher salaries were able to recruit and retain better qualified staff who engaged in more appropriate interactions with children. We found that children cared for by untrained staff in programs with high turnover were suffering in their language and social development.

The Child Care Employee Project currently works to address the staffing crisis through a variety of avenues. I have enclosed an article which details the latest state efforts to develop policy initiatives directed toward improving child care compensation. CCEP is engaged in ongoing research in this area, tracking innovative approaches and investigating new options, and we will be happy to share our information with you. Additionally, we coordinate the Worthy Wage Campaign, a national grassroots effort to educate the American public and policy makers about the staffing crisis. We also continue to collect salary data similar to our 1989 study of Colorado.

Please feel free to call on us if there is any support we can lend to your efforts. Quality child care requires an environment that values adults if it is to value children. We look forward to Colorado's progress in making child care a career people can afford to pursue.

Sincerely,

Marcy Whitebook

Marcy Whitebook
Executive Director

Child Care
Employee
Project

CCAC

CHILD CARE ACTION CAMPAIGN • 330 SEVENTH AVENUE, 17th FLOOR • NEW YORK, NY 10001 • (212) 239-0138
FAX (212) 268-6515

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Gerald McEntee
AFSCME, AFL-CIO
Evelyn Moore
National Black Child Development Institute
Gwen Morgan
Wheelock College
Sondra L. Murphy
New York Women's Foundation
Ann Muscari
Kinder-Care Learning Centers, Inc.
Irene Natividad
National Women's Political Caucus
Arthur L. Novell
Markham/Novell Communications, Ltd.
Sally Orr
Sue Plastrik
National Council of Jewish Women
Bea Romer
State of Colorado
Herman Sillas
Ochoa & Sillas
James Strickland
Child, Inc.
Pierre M. Sutton
Inner City Broadcasting Corp.
Dee Topol
Primerica Foundation
Bernice Weissbourd
Family Focus, Inc.
Edward Zigler, Ph.D.
Bush Center, Yale University
General Counsel
Allen L. Thomas
Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison
Executive Director
Barbara Reisman

September 15, 1992

Honorable Roy Romer
Governor
State of Colorado
136 State Capitol
Denver, CO 80203-1792

Dear Governor Romer:

The Child Care Action Campaign wholeheartedly endorses the recommendations of the Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force.

Research clearly indicates that the quality of child care is affected by both staff turnover and provider training. The Task Force's recommendations and action plan provide a comprehensive framework for addressing these two critical areas. We are very impressed with the Task Force's elaboration of the core knowledge and competencies for child care providers and educators and its plan to improve articulation among training programs.

The action plan for creating incentives that address salary, benefits and status issues is both comprehensive and practical. The Task Force clearly articulates the importance of working to change public perceptions and business' attitudes about the importance of child care and preschool education, and provides a workable strategy to do this. Colorado is also leading the way in helping to educate the public, professionals, and the business community about the critical connection between child care and education, making it clear that child care is the form that early education takes for a large portion of our children.

We believe that the Task Force's recommendations and action plan will significantly improve the quality of child care and preschool education in Colorado and will serve as a model for the rest of the country.

Sincerely,

Barbara Reisman

Barbara Reisman
Executive Director

BR:ds

The Clayton Foundation

Trustee of the
George W. Clayton Trust and College

August 5, 1992

Hon. Roy Romer
Governor of Colorado
State Capitol
Denver, CO 80203-1792

Dear Governor Romer:

The board and staff of The Clayton Foundation and of the Clayton/Mile High Famly Futures Project are pleased to write a letter in support of the work of the Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force recommendations.

Those of us who have feet in the worlds of both education and business have come to realize over the last decade or so that the changes in our society as a result of more women in the work force on a full-time basis are having a dramatic impact on our youngest citizens. Although women continue to be the predominate caretakers of children, the settings have changed from the one-on-one home environment to child care settings, family day care homes, and preschools where children of different ages, diverse backgrounds, and varying developmental needs are grouped together.

We at Clayton find it ironic that although there appears to be no disagreement in the literature about the importance of "the first sixty months," as a society we have done little to prepare or reward those who enter this mushrooming early childhood education work arena. Had we adopted the same attitude in similarly important human service areas such as medicine, the consequences are unthinkable. But because the harm that can occur or the positive outcomes that can be accomplished are not as visible -- that is to say they happen in the minds and hearts of little chidlren rather than in their bodies -- we continue to ignore the knowledge and the data available to us.

3801 Martin Luther King Blvd.
Denver, CO 80205
303/355-4411

We are pleased, therefore, to see that the work of the Early Childhood Professional Standards Task Force directly addresses our concerns about both preparation and compensation. We know you share our awareness as well as our concerns or you would not have appointed the Task Force in the first place. We urge you to act quickly to implement the recommendations so that we will begin to address the needs of children, our work force in the making, in a much more effective way through better trained and compensated and thus more competent personnel.

Sincerely,

Adele Phelan

Adele Phelan
President

Colorado Community College & Occupational Education System

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Denver, Colorado 80204-2554
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FAX (303) 825-4295

Printed on recycled stock

September 9, 1992

Kathleen Shindler, Special Projects Coordinator
Governor's Office
1211 State Capital Building
Denver, Colorado 80203

Dear Kathleen:

Thank you for allowing me to review the draft of the Proposal for a Colorado System of Early Childhood Professional Development. Your report accurately reflects the work of the various subcommittees, and creatively synthesizes the input from all of the constituent groups into a very comprehensive and coherent plan.

All forecasts regarding the social and economic future of Colorado have included the requirement that quality child care exist for all citizens if we are to fully develop Colorado's human resources base and contribute to Colorado's economic growth and vitality. Coincidentally, these are the goals of the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education. I am convinced that to realize these goals a rational and systematic method of training must be supported by all segments of our educational community in Colorado, high school through graduate school. To paraphrase Governor Romer, we must behave as a system to insure a truly seamless curriculum and an effective articulation process. We simply cannot afford program duplication and unnecessary encumbrances to the quality training goals outlined in the plan.

I'm convinced that the plan has clearly focused on the salient elements required to achieve such a system of training. I look forward to providing further assistance on all future goals of the project. Moreover, with the leadership of the Governor's office and the cooperation of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, the higher education community, the Colorado Department of Social Services, and the Colorado Department of Education, all of the goals in the plan are achievable.

Sincerely,

Dale Beckmann
Director of Instruction

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

"The National Committee on Economic Development, a prestigious group of CEOs, has identified early education as one of the most cost-effective steps we can take to prevent later failure. These business leaders estimate that for every dollar we invest in early education, we save $3 -$6 in costs down the line in terms of increased income and decreased need for services such as special education and welfare.

If we want the greatest payoff from early education, we must recognize that success depends not only on reaching the child in the first five years, but on the competency of the teacher. Quality early education happens in a variety of places -- public preschools, private child care centers and family child care homes. Yet, there is no standards of quality that is consistent across these settings. We need such a standard."

-- Governor Roy Romer, State of the State, 1992.